DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 374 500 EA 025 940

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TITLE Gaining Voice: Democratic Praxis in Restructured Schools.
PUB DATE Apr 94
NOTE 51p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 4-8, 1994).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Democracy; *Democratic Values; Elementary Secondary Education; Organizational Climate; Organizational Communication; *Participative Decision Making; Power Structure; *School Restructuring; *Theory Practice Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Praxis

ABSTRACT

Is the work of democracy too hard for schools to implement? This paper presents findings of a study that examined the dialectical relationship between the espoused values of democracy in schools and the actual practice of equity and inclusion in site-based decision making. Specifically, it examines the lived experience of the people inside schools who experience participation or lack of participation. The two schools participating in the case study were part of a nine-site network in Oregon, dedicated to school restructuring. Methodology involved document analysis, videotaped interviews with principals and teachers, interviews with principals and site-team chairs, a demographic survey of all staff, and a schoolwide sociogram analysis. Four understandings about democratic praxis emerged: (1) the conscious construction of democratic values in schools does contribute to increased democratic practices in schools; (2) democracy is extraordinarily hard work; (3) democratic praxis can be attained, but only if educators recognize that changes in language/ideas do not change peoples' fundamental values; and (4) democratic praxis in schools can succeed only if the dialogue attends to issues of access, status, and hierarchy. To sustain democratic praxis, educators must understand and integrate the following concepts--the social construction of democratic practices in schools, micropolitical behaviors, a systems perspective, and metacognition. Eight figures and five tables are included. (LMI)

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Gaining Voice: Democratic Praxis In Restructured Schools

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Presented at the 1994 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association New Orleans, LA

This research was conducted under the auspices of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators' Foundation and supported by a U. S. Department of Education Grant No. R215E10212.

EA 025 940

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Gaining Voice: Democratic Praxis In Restructured Schools

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How can we justify our belief in the democratic principle elsewhere, and then go back entirely upon it when we come to education? John Dewey

Democracy is very hard work. Educators espouse democratic values in mission statements and teach about democratic traditions in classrooms, but frequently find that the praxis of democracy in schools is more demanding. Praxis, as defined by Benson (1977), is the active reconstruction of social relations. The values that must ground democratic praxis in schools, according to Calabrese (1990), include the prevalence of justice, cherishing of equity, the practice of integrity, active and full participation of constituents, a norm of inclusion, equity in resource distribution, and reasonable recourse for grievances. Calabrese took the uncompromising position that schools cannot teach the rhetoric of democracy without demonstrating the active and evolving practice in day to day activity. Commitment to the democratic values and practices listed by Calabrese requires a free flow of influence connected to the opportunity to have voice, to be heard, to be actively listened to, and to participate. Commitment to these values could also mean schools become sites of increased political activity and increased conflict. Giroux (1992) held that "when wedded to its most emancipatory possibilities, democracy encourages all citizens to actively construct and share power over those institutions that govern their lives". However, he also suggested that there is a crisis in meaning and practice of American democracy manifested by the current anxiety about schooling. In other words, we are not good at the hard work of democratic praxis.

Giroux may be right; perhaps we have lost our will and skill for democratic practices. Some researchers (Clune, 1988; Conley, 1993; Conley, 1991; Malen & Ogawa, 1988) reported that despite the fact that more democratic governance processes such as site-based management, participatory decision-making, collaborative efforts, and decentralized administration are at the heart of school restructuring efforts, these governance changes have resulted in minimal participation and influence for the members of school communities.

Is the work of democracy too hard for schools to implement? This study was initiated to gain better insights into the dialectical relationship of espoused values of democracy in schools and actual practice of equity and inclusion in site-based decision making. In his discussion of dialectical thought, Giroux (1983), noted that it "reveals

incompleteness where completeness is claimed" (p. 18). The study was designed to examine the lived experience of the people inside schools who experience participation or the lack of participation, and in turn, "know democracy in school. Giving attention to Calabrese's (1990) list of democratic values, data collection focused specifically on the flow of influence, the opportunity to have voice, the opportunity to be listened to, and the opportunity to participate.

Following an introduction to the participants in the research, I review the literature on democratic praxis and current research on emergent participatory practices in schools. I then detail the methodology for the study and bring forward 4 emergent understandings about democratic praxis gleaned from 2 case studies of restructuring schools. Finally, I share the lessons learned from this research effort: lessons about democratic praxis for researchers and lessons about democratic praxis for educators.

Participants

The participating schools in this study were a part of a nine-site network in Oregon funded by the U.S. Department of Education grant from the Secretary's Fund for Innovation in Education to develop a broader and more useful research base on schools engaged in restructuring. While completing extensive profiles of these schools for the federal project, I was encouraged by their commitment to wide-scale participatory practices. Because most of my evaluation work was limited to principals and site-team leaders, I wondered if this democratic voice was as evident within the deep structure of the school organization. Site teams in two network schools agreed to participate in a study of the democratic praxis in their schools. Their decision to participate was based on two factors: (1) the members of their organization would not be adversely affected by an additional voice participating in their restructuring conversation; and (2) the data would support their efforts to restructure participation in their schools.

The contexts of the participating schools were an interesting contrast. Brooks High School[1] is a typically large urban school with 108 staff members and all the cultural attributes of a highly prized excellent secondary school. Riverside Elementary is a small rural elementary school with only 24 staff members and all the cultural attributes of a long-term elementary school family. The high school is known for extraordinary numbers of awards and active internal change efforts. The elementary school had never received awards and, until the district mandated a major change, had not independently pursued

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[1] All names of schools and individuals are psuedonyms.

organizational learning. Both schools had many new faculty members, one due to retirements, the other due to increasing enrollment. In both cases, the new faculty hired tended to be experienced teachers. Although the study was not designed for cross-case comparison, the likenesses and differences between the schools became important as the data were examined for patterns.

Democratic Praxis

Current literature agrees that shared decision-making, site-based management, teacher leadership, and increased collaboration within the school community supports restructuring efforts (Gladder, 1990; Goldman, Dunlap, & Conley, 1993; Louis & Miles, 1990; Wasley, 1991). But there is little empirical work that specifically reviews the dialectical relationship between the democratic values of equity and inclusion and actual participation in schools.

Schattschneider (1960) highlighted the challenges faced within schools aspiring to democratic praxis when he said that "our chances of getting democracy and keeping it would be better if we made up our minds about what it is" (p. 131). He described the praxis of democracy as a state of mind having to do with an attitude about self and others coupled with actual practice that depends on the willingness of the people to do what is necessary to keep the idea going. According to philosopher Ernest Bayles (1960), the idea to be kept going involves the development of a relationship between the opportunity to participate in making decisions and the responsibility to abide by the will of the majority until the decision is changed. Follett (1924), in her early studies of agricultural cooperatives, suggested that the aim of democracy is to integrate desires, that a true democratic approach is based on mutual influence rather than equal opportunity to gain power over others. She argued that "democracy does not register various opinions; it is an attempt to create unity" (Follett, 1924, p. 201). Moving from openness to opinions to creating unity speaks directly to the values of inclusion and equity. Shattschneider (1960) suggested that, at its best, democracy is a collaboration of ignorant people and experts, and he highlighted the challenges of equal inclusion by describing democracy as "a system designed to be sensitive to the needs of ordinary people regardless of whether or not the pedants approve of them" (p. 135).

In order to build a collaboration of ignorant people and experts, to increase collective action and mutual influence, and to maintain a willingness to keep the idea going, democratic praxis in schools must include two interrelated elements: (1) an expressed set of values that actually leads to (2) specific practices for all participants in the school community. The first notion represents an intellectual expression of beliefs and practices;

however, the second notion, which leads to praxis, is dependent on action and the interaction of people.

Values

Early Progressive educators described democratic praxis as a way of living together (Counts, 1939; Dewey, 1916; Taba, 1932). Dewey actually associated the degree of participation by individuals to the breakdown in barriers of race and class, noting that the more diverse the conversation, and the less exclusive the interests, the easier it would be to build shared concerns and personal capacities.[2] Schattschneider (1960), in his discussions about workplace democracy, also stressed this shared value for equality and participation. He described it as everyone being comfortable with being an expert and being ignorant.

Education of administrators during the Progressive movement included guidelines to support equity and participation, or the democratization of schools. These guidelines, which are strikingly similar to current guidelines for site-based management, included group processes to support governance, development of collective vision, attention to social realities, development of a flexible organization, community connections, and the abolition of administrative "vetoes, reservations, and sacred prerogatives (Koopman, Miel, & Misner, 1943, p. 322).

Praxis

Participatory practices in local school sites gained increased emphasis in the 1980's in 3 national reports that defined the issues for restructuring schools. Each report called for an end to the isolation of teachers, the sharing of power among teachers, administrators, and in some cases, community members, and democratic practices that encouraged thoughtful discussion about the fundamental values that undergird education and schooling. First, the Carnegie Commission Report (1986), Teachers for the 21st Century, recommended that the work of teachers needed to be redesigned to give them increased autonomy to solve the problems of student achievement, thus increasing accountability. Second, the Holmes Group (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1986) called for increased collaboration between school sites and universities. The third, and very potent report, A Time for Results (1986), came from the National Governors' Association. Building on the Carnegie Report, the governors called for increased

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[2] Dewey's expressed concerns for social justice and increased participatory practices were paralleled by many other progressive educators. (Barnard, 1938; Coyle, 1947; Follett, 1924; Koopman, Miel, & Misner, 1943; Tead, 1935) Counts (1939) proposed that democratic practices in schools might actually create a new social order. Fleming (1982) concluded that this perspective came about as a result of great dissatisfaction and damaged social relations between teachers and administrators caused by the emergent hierarchy and bureaucracy in schools during the early 1920s.

leadership at the local level for school reform. Termed "school or site-based management," this proposal called for localized decision-making. The governors, with the support of most major educational professional associations, took the position that reform would only happen if people felt a sense of ownership and responsibility for the processes of schooling (Lewis, 1989).

This sense of ownership, according to Follett (1924), requires an erasing of hierarchical lines and the redeployment of bureaucratic mechanisms based on the legitimate and active influence of the people whose lives are affected by them. It is this personal and human element of democratic practices that often inhibits their implementation. Current literature on participatory practices indicates that teachers and administrators have very different perceptions about what is going on. There is a very fine line between formal authority and informal influence in schools where teachers are decision-makers. S. Conley (1988) likened this role strain to walking a tightrope.

Research on Emergent Participatory Practices

There is limited empirical research that directly examines participatory practices in public school settings (Blase, 1991; Gutman, 1988; Johnson, 1988). Blase (1991) reported that most published studies of school-level micropolitics provide little data on cooperative forms of political interaction. The theoretical or descriptive studies seldom make connections to democratic values, or they focus mainly on the principal who is frequently viewed as the most significant figure in a participatory effort (Blase, 1991; Clune & White, 1988). In my view, this narrow focus on principals and the lack of information on deeper political interactions contributes to misperceptions about participatory practices.

Most empirical work on democratic practices focuses on single attributes such as teacher decision-making (Imber & Duke, 1984; Duke et al., 1980); collaboration (B. Gladder, 1990); teacher leadership (Short, 1993; Wasley, 1991); shared governance (Blase, 1988); and work redesign (Hart, 1992). Other literature examined the challenges of participatory practices or open interaction: the potential loss of autonomy (B. Gladder, 1992; Wasley, 1991), lack of time for quality communication about purpose and pedagogy (Duke et. al., 1980) the isolation of the teachers in the work setting, and the potential challenges of internal dissent within a school organization (K. Gladder, 1992; Glickman, 1990; Hoyle, 1986).

Loss of autonomy is presented as the greatest challenge of democratic praxis in schools because schools are organizations that have traditionally supported great privacy (B. Gladder, 1990; Wasley, 1991). Yet, B. Gladder (1990) found that "teachers talked

wistfully about having more opportunities to work interdependently" (p. 260). Other researchers on restructuring efforts (Sommerfield, 1992; Tewel, 1992; Wasley, 1991) reported that the benefits of participation and collaboration far outweighed the loss of autonomy. Little (1990) described teachers feeling "enlivened" by the constant interaction with colleagues, but also highlights the strain that resulted from multiple perspectives entering the conversation about the tasks of schooling.

The enlivened school environment described by Little also involved an increase in visible conflict. In a review of several school sites in Georgia's League of Professional Schools, Glickman (1990) described the challenges of participatory practices. Studying schools engaged in site based governance, he observed that "the more an empowered school works collectively, the more individual differences and tensions among the staff members become obvious" (p. 71). He noted that shared governance brought differences to the surface, giving everyone an equal right to the debate over ideology that influences local site decisions about schooling. Glickman concluded that "over time, schools use a process of shared governance to control their own destinies and to reorganize themselves in creative ways to help students and teachers become more successful" (p. 70).

Emergent teacher leadership roles bring new paradoxes to schools. Wasley (1991) reported that most teacher leadership was developed within the traditional hierarchical system, teacher leadership positions frequently added tension and competition to a work site, and accrediting expertise to colleagues was rarely comfortable. She concluded:

> The creation of teacher leadership roles means that teachers and principals must forge new working relationships and must be willing to share responsibility for instructional improvement in the building. Traditional modes of interaction--like delegation--are not real acts of shared leadership. . . . Teachers and administrators must be able to have frank discussions about authority and accountability if teacher leadership roles are to have any potential whatsoever. (p. 164)

Internal debates over ideology are not common in public school settings, nor are schools organized in ways to promote such debates. In early studies of California schools committed to participatory decision making, Duke et al. (1980) reported that the existence of site-based teams in no way insured participation. Researchers observed a distinction between participation and influence, noting that formal teacher governance structures, like site teams, had the potential to actually inhibit teacher influence.

Attributes of Democratic Practices

Democratic praxis requires members of school communities to engage in organizational conflict. Engaging all participants in a dialogue, building consensus,

maintaining support for majority decisions while maintaining support for disagreement, then are key factors in the emergence of democratic organizations. Dewey (1916) believed that open and socialized conflict, the participation of a group of people in a mutual interest, where each person had to refer actions to that of others and consider the actions of others, could actually reduce the barriers of class, race, and gender. He pointed out that if class stratification was to be avoided, we "must see to it that intellectual opportunities are accessible to all on equable and easy terms" (p. 88). In her study of early agricultural cooperatives, Follett (1924), observed that "there is no democracy without contribution" (p. 215). Though she promoted a consensual approach to democratic participation, she agreed with Bayles (1960) who advised that democratic consensus in no way insures "right decisions."

A lively ideological debate about the nature and design of schooling may be necessary for democratic praxis, but Blase (1988) found very little evidence that supported this type of open and uninhibited interaction within schools. In a two-year study of teacher political orientations, he found that teachers and principals actually worked in congruence to maintain the image of school as non-controversial, stable, and unproblematic. At the same time, Blase concluded that compliance and acquiescence were more evident in school communication than behaviors and attributes that might support democratic processes. His data suggested that teachers' political orientations, their willingness to confront, disagree, even interact with principals are governed by their perception of the principal's expectations.

According to Schattschneider (1960), people are powerless if the political enterprise is not competitive. He pointed out that most theories about politics deal with the question of who can get into the competition and who is excluded. He also believed, along with Follett (1924) and Bayles (1960) that, in a democracy, the scope of conflict must be as broad as possible. He concluded that the socialization of the conflict was a critical factor for successful democratic praxis. Gutman (1988) concurred, suggesting that controversies about education are an important part of social progress, that the arguments themselves help educate the public.

There is a very real and personal dilemma for people attempting democratic practices. As people challenge assumptions, engage in conflict, and negotiate many points of view, there is the possibility that personal ideas might undergo reconstruction. Focusing on open and uninhibited interaction as a requirement for effective democratic practices, D. Conley (1993) proposed that schools act more like a community. He challenged educators to move from behind closed doors, doing what they please, accepting and encouraging cynical rejection of new ideas. Conley pointed out that, to be a community, educators have

to revitalize skills in communication, negotiation, consensus, and dispute resolution. Gutman (1988) concurred, but also pointed out the disadvantages and the benefits:

> The politics that result from our democratic deliberations will not always be the right ones, but they will be more enlightened--by the values and concerns of the many communities that constitute a democracy--than those that would be made by unaccountable educational experts. (p. 185)

Her view matched Schattschneider's (1960) caution that everyone has the potential to be an expert and everyone has the potential to be ignorant. Viewing democratic practices in schools as a moral decision, Gutman maintained that democratic education must have "conscious social construction" (p. 186).

The Flow of Power/Knowledge in Schools

If democratic praxis for the purpose of school restructuring is a social construction mediated by individuals, then how people in schools understand and experience the flow of knowledge is related to their perceptions of inclusion. It then becomes important to examine the dialectical relationship of power/knowledge to participation and inclusion among people in schools.

The importance of the study of the power/knowledge relationship as a part of the conscious social construction of democratic praxis in schools becomes clear when we examine the new vocabulary emerging from the current restructuring literature. Words such as empowerment, teacher leadership, facilitative leadership, transformational leadership, outcomes-based instruction, efficacy, and authentic assessment dominate the discourse. Though many of these notions imply or openly propose increased participation in school governance and decision-making, the literature does not include reference to the concomitant democratic values of equity, social justice, and inclusion. What then should we find as examples of actions connected to power/knowledge within schools practicing increased participation?

Follett (1924) took the position that power with was the only appropriate ideal in a democracy. She advanced the notion of mutual influence, suggesting that experts and people listening to experts have to commit to learning with each other rather than one from the other. She said that the notion of expert was a serious barrier to participation and communication and like Schattschneider (1960), promoted the exploitation of influence, stating that:

> people are influencing each other all the time. Instead of that influence being casual, we should be able to make more of it; there is much divergence going to waste. We must free the way, create the conditions, for the productive relating of human beings. (p. 226)

Foucault, who also was concerned with the notion of expert, presented power/knowledge as one word because he viewed practices as events, struggles, and conflicts "within which power and knowledge are simultaneously diffused" (Lemert & Gillan, 1982, p. 135). By asking questions such as, "Who gets to participate and who is excluded?" and "How is privilege and authority maintained and who will profit?" (p.223), he also modified the notion of power as a class, race, and gender issue. Instead of a rigid concept of domination or subjugation, he offered an interactive view of power, a power that is exercised by people rather than imposed on people.[3] Researchers, examining current practices in site managed schools, described this exercise of power among teachers as increased political behavior in schools (Goldman et al., 1993). The authors observed and spoke of "informal lobbying," "bringing people along," and "building synergistic groups of teachers, parents, and sometimes students, in much the same way principals tried to build staff groups" (p. 18).

In her study of teacher leaders, Wasley (1991) discussed the new challenges that emerge in schools that change the power/knowledge flow. She reported that once teacher were in leadership positions, they perceived they now had access to "privileged information" (p. 141). Teachers in these assigned roles then, according to Wasley, faced the dilemma of different status with their peers; the privileged knowledge classified them as experts. Follett (1924) describes this kind of expert knowledge as a "chasm which ideas cannot cross" (p. 205). This dialectical relationship of power and knowledge, which leads to status, privilege, inclusion, or oppression gives credence to the human factor that mediates which knowledge goes forward in a transformation effort. In the case of schools engaging in democratic practices, people who previously had little or no voice in mediating knowledge are now constructing the organizations that previously governed their lives. [4]

In the case of these restructuring schools then, the questions to be asked include: What knowledge is shared and who is it shared with? Are teacher leaders selected or do they emerge? If, and when, power/knowledge is shared, do emergent leaders behave in

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[3] Foucault (cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983) posited that "the exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome" (p. 221). This perspective matches Schattscneider's notion of the socialization of conflict and Gutman's position on the conscious social construction of democratic praxis.

[4] As more people participate in defining the norms for schooling, they are exercising what Foucault called an individualizing and a totalizing form of power (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983). In other words, participants are defining or creating knowledge or rules of right that inform power relations for themselves and others in school settings.

democratic ways and exhibit democratic values? Does everyone have equal access to the conversation? What are the attributes that could help us know democratic practices among the people in a school organization? These are the organizing questions then that informed the data collection and analyses that follows.

Methodology

The notion of the dialectical also influenced how I conducted the research process. My intent in this inquiry was to respect how the people in the school sites came to know and how they acted on what they knew. Believing that I could not study the values of inclusion and equity by practicing a research standard of excluding people as subjects, I bounded this inquiry using what sociologists call "people's sociology", a methodology that gives "attention to the relevance of knowledge for empowering people" (Hacker, 1990, p. 15). It is a method of coming to know that preserves the position of the subjects as knowers and actors in the research. I also tried not to lose sight of the fact that the dialogue between myself and the research participants constantly created new meaning for both of us about the value of participation and inclusion.

To maximize the understanding of the personal dynamics in the school sites, I combined qualitative and quantitative procedures in a case study design. Jick (1983) argued that, in addition to building confidence in results, triangulation based on multiple methods has the potential to bring out divergent viewpoints. Denzin (1983), who also supported use of multiple methods to strengthen data, maintained that "each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality" (p. 26). This "holographic view" (Guba ,1985, p. 26), the perspective that everything in an organization is dynamically interconnected, proved to be one of the more powerful guiding principals for analyzing the data for missing or marginalized voices.

Following Smith's (1990) notions of collaboration, I began the research process by inviting each school site team and building principal to participate in the design of the research plan. Based on my review of the literature and my working knowledge of each site, I shared a list of possible research questions and activities with the team, inviting them to make additional suggestions. The data gathering procedures agreed to included content analysis of multiple documents, review of video-taped interviews with principals and teachers, interviews with principals and site-team chairs, a demographic survey of all staff, and a school-wide sociogram conducted in an interview setting. In this case, the sociogram was used as data-gathering instrument to capture the perceived dynamics among the people in the selected schools.

Sociograms are a seldom-used research tool for studies of group dynamics. Sociometrist J. L Moreno (1960) developed a theory of networks using sociograms and

noted that the use of this research strategy "gives subjects research status by changing them from subjects into participating and evaluating actors" (p. x). His work used sociograms extensively to trace individual perceptions of group dynamics based on the idea that the free and independent life of members of a group represented a constant in the organization of a community. Using the term social atom, Moreno theorized that an individual and the people to whom he or she is significantly related at the time, function as though they are one unit.[5]

Four significant factors influenced my decision to administer the sociogram questionnaire in a personal interview setting. First, current research that examined participation and collaboration in restructuring schools maintained the traditional subject-object relationship of researcher and researched and each study had a limited numbers of respondents at the research site (B. Gladder, 1990; K. Gladder, 1990; Wasley, 1991). Because I was interested in notions of inclusion and exclusion, and participation and marginalization, it seemed critical to find an informing strategy that supported maximum inclusion of respondents. Second, the people engaged in this restructuring effort were described by some observers as living in a "highly-charged, highly-emotional environment" (D. Conley, personal communication, December, 1991). Consequently, the inquiry activities had the potential to move from interactive to invasive if careful attention was not given to the emotional levels at each site. Third, the information asked for in the sociogram questionnaire required personal judgments about the behavior and influence of colleagues. In schools attempting to build better working relationships, an impersonal request for these judgments could damage the emergent trust among the school staffs. Also, by contacting each staff member in person, I was able to respond to all questions about the intent of the study and the use of the data. I was also able to code responses in front of the participant, insuring that no names were ever recorded. Fourth, and perhaps most important, the personal contact during the sociogram questionnaire interview allowed collection of the additional comments of respondents. Following Yin's (1989) version of a "focused interview" (p. 89), the sociogram interview became an open-ended data collection tool that directed me to many additional data sources and formed new questions. The open-ended process encouraged respondents to explain answers and add commentary about the restructuring efforts and participatory practices. Individuals also had the opportunity to

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[5] In his review of the history of sociometry, Jiri Nehnevajsa (1960) noted that sociometric measures are only tools, but suggested that they can be "used to obtain data necessary for the restructuring of groups, for the diagnosis of interpersonal conflicts, and for the imbalances in social atoms of individuals" (p. 729). A standard approach is to develop a questionnaire that asks respondents to nominate a limited number of people they would like to work with and the number of times a person is nominated determines social acceptance or social status (Dimock, 1987).

argue with the structure of the questions. Many interviewees openly disagreed with limiting their responses, giving me lengthy and critical explanations of why a limited number of responses was an inappropriate representation of what one teacher said "is really going on in this school." The narrative data and arguments added another perspective to all quantitative data.

I initiated the research at each site by reading all materials that related to their school improvement process during the 1988-92 school years, including grant applications, year-end evaluations, school profiles, building survey materials, school newsletters, and staff bulletins. These activities gave me a working knowledge of the written and recorded intents for restructuring in each site. I then prepared a 14-item demographic survey and 12-item sociogram questionnaire, both designed to gain insight into staff perceptions of participation and influence. The demographic survey included variables of gender, age, three levels of professional experience, building participation factors, and Likert-type scales for describing access to information, awareness of information, and personal assessment of participation.

Recognizing that participation and influence are not always visible or vocal, the sociogram questions were designed to explore respondents' perceptions of participation and influence in the school's restructuring activities from a variety of perspectives. The questionnaire asked staff members to identify key decision-makers, people who influenced decision-makers, and people who had little or no influence on decision-makers. They were also asked to identify colleagues who generated ideas about school restructuring, colleagues who influenced school-wide opinion about restructuring, colleagues who influence their personal thinking about restructuring, and colleagues who had little or no influence on school-wide opinion about school restructuring. During interviews, all participants saw a complete list of all school staff members and were requested to confine their responses to school restructuring issues. All responses were coded by the interviewer using pre-determined numbers in order to protect the confidentiality of all staff members.

An announcement in the school bulletin and a personal letter to each staff member notified school employees of the invitation to participate in the study. At each site, I followed up on the letter invitation with a personal invitation for an appointment to complete the sociogram questionnaire in person. By following this procedure, every staff member had an opportunity to contribute to the data collection on participatory practices.

Of the 108 employees at Brooks High School, 74 staff members (34 females and 40 males) were interviewed for this study. 12 notified me that we could not match an appointment time, three declined to be interviewed, and 19 did not respond in any way. The group interviewed at Brooks included 79.4% of the certificated staff members, 100%

of the administrative staff, and 60% of the classified staff. At Riverside Elementary, participants included 16 of 24 staff members. A part-time media specialist, a cook, a retiring teacher and a part-time aide declined to be interviewed and a teacher who was ill did not return a mailed survey and questionnaire. The group interviewed at Riverside included 77.8% of the certified staff, 83% of the classified staff, and the one administrator in the building.

Data Analysis Procedures

The sociogram questionnaire responses and demographic survey data were entered into separate SPSSx files in order to tabulate frequencies and crosstabulations for all categorical variables. Frequency data for sociogram questionnaire responses were then merged with the demographic survey data to develop crosstabulations for analyzing choices for each sociogram question. The resulting crosstabulations, with levels of significance determined by Chi-square (X^2), helped me understand the strength of relationships among variables that led to additional questions about the anecdotal and interview data.

A modified version of matrices were used to analyze the sociometric data. Through the use of matrices, Forsyth and Katz (1960) found they could gain better understanding of the dynamics of sub-groups, particularly when they examined how particular individuals or subgroups were marginalized or excluded. In the case of this study, displaying responses to specific sociogram questions on a matrix that also used the demographic data allowed me to develop profiles of people who had influence and profiles of people who were marginalized. This process followed Smith's (1990) guiding principles for understanding the everyday lived situation, or what she called "the problematic that is implicit in the everyday world" (p. 91). By listening to multiple voices in multiple ways, I moved toward "a possible set of questions that may not have been posed or a set of puzzles that do not yet exist in the form of puzzles but are 'latent' in the actualities of everyday lived experience" (Smith, 1990, p. 91).

To locate marginalized voices or the latent puzzles, I then re-examined the relationships among quantitative data, anecdotal information, and interview transcripts using Benson's (1977), dialectical analysis. A dialectical analysis, which is designed to respect the "process of becoming" (p. 3) that exists in organizations in transition, is guided by four principles: "social construction, totality, contradiction, and praxis" (p. 1).

Benson suggested that one form of evidence of social construction is found in purposeful alteration of the features of an organization. In the case of schools engaged in democratic practices, the people who mediate the construction of a new conversation should include people who previously had little or no voice in the organization.

Totality focuses on a systems view, looking at the multiple interconnections that occur as people construct a new relationship or organization. In schools, where democratic relationships are under construction, there should be evidence of increased tension, conflict, and political activity .

A dialectical analysis of contradictions looks for ruptures, inconsistencies, and incompatibilities. In this study, contradictions were examined by looking for marginalized voices: patterns of silenced voices, patterns of excluded voices, and patterns of missing voices.

Praxis, as defined by Benson (1977), is people becoming active agents in reconstructing their own social relations. For each of these schools, praxis should include reflective dialogue and actions related to equity and inclusion in their restructuring processes.

These four principles were then used to examine the congruence of the stated values and lived experience of democratic practices among people in the participating schools

Findings and Discussion

I believe that democracy is something we are rather than something we have. The findings of this study suggest that educators have much to learn about democratic praxis in schools. The analysis of each school case that follows resulted in 4 cogent understandings about democratic praxis in restructuring schools:

1) The conscious construction of democratic values in schools, which Gutman (1988) calls a moral commitment, does contribute to increased democratic practices in schools. The data showed that the conscious social contraction of participatory practices modified the personal dynamics among staff members and dramatically affected the way people in schools thought about their relationships in the workplace. Yet, I also found evidence that the lack of stated and examined values about equity and inclusion governed how participation and influence was experienced.

2) Democracy is extraordinarily hard work. The data brought forward Schattschneider's (1960) cautions about equal opportunity for ignorance and expertise and the need for the socialization of conflict in democratic workplaces. In the case of these schools, embedded notions of hierarchy and status, long-term program and role structures, and minimal or non-existent habits of open dialogue were major hurdles to overcome if people were to know democracy in schools.

3) Democratic praxis, the commitment to actualizing values that redefine relationships, can be attained, but only if educators confront that a change of language and ideas does not necessarily change the fundamental values that govern the behavior of people in schools. The data in this study clearly pointed out that potent language (collaboration, cooperation, integration, systems thinking, shared decisions) did not equate to potent values (equity, inclusion, participation) in action. In fact, the data suggested that educators engaged in participatory practices attain a false consciousness about their democratic practices that blinds them to the lived experience of marginalized people.

4) Democratic praxis in schools can only succeed if the dialogue about participatory practices attends to issues of access, status, and hierarchy in schools. Who participates in that dialogue, and the degree to which they are regarded as equal participants, will be direct evidence of emergent democratic praxis.

A summary and analysis of data from each case study follows.

Brooks High School

Brooks High School, as described by one teacher, "is an alternative school in a tuxedo. We're still wearing suits and ties--trying to keep our image as a school of excellence, but we're really being an alternative school" (personal communication, B. March, 1992). A visitor or new enrollee receives a brochure that quickly identifies the center of attention at this school: the student. A student-centered starburst diagram on the cover is under the headline: "Collaborating for the success of all students." According to the principal, Carl Williams, the published statement about collaboration for increasing that success is not just a set of words. Williams directed me to the published mission of the school, noting that it was proposed, discussed, and argued over by all staff. It states:

> The mission of our school is to provide a climate that expects excellence by EMPOWERING intellectual curiosity, HONORING academic achievement, DEMANDING self-discipline, DEVELOPING personal growth, NURTURING self worth, ENCOURAGING learning for a lifetime, and PROMOTING a sense of community. This is accomplished through a basic core of academic courses and an enriching set of electives and co-curricular offerings. (1991-92 registration bulletin)

Brooks is 1 of 5 comprehensive high schools in a city of 150,000 people. Located in the middle of an older well-established neighborhood, students come from a variety of ethnic and class backgrounds. Like many urban schools, the poverty rate is increasing with the number of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch (21%) growing over 5% in the past 3 years, a much higher growth rate than the district average.

Initial efforts for school restructuring began in 1985 when Brooks joined the Northwest Regional Laboratory's Onward to Excellence program (heretofore referred to as OTE). The OTE process required schools to establish a school site committee and collect data for school profiles.

Social Construction

The establishment the Site Committee in 1985 initiated a purposeful social construction of new meaning about decision-making, authority, power, and influence for staff members at Brooks High School. The development of that new meaning revolved around the regular use of school profile data to generate all-school discussions about schooling at Brooks. The oft stated and surveyed view that "everyone has a chance to participate if they want to get into the action" was evidence that people had access to important conversations that affected their work. Although there were no formal criteria for balancing membership of the committee by gender, age, or experience, staff members indicated in interviews that informal discussions about these issues had occurred during the first years of the OTE program. One result of this social construction of a more democratic process was the emergence of new and unexpected teacher leaders at Brooks. There was some evidence that the informal commitment to diverse membership on the site committee led to increased attention to and participation in the restructuring activities by staff members who, under other circumstances, would have resisted the reform effort.

With increased access to school leadership, traditional school leaders found themselves challenged to maintain accumulated power and influence while, at the same time, they attempted to participate in totally restructured conversations. This was particularly true in the case of long-term staff members at Brooks who had positions of influence as department chairs. A department chair captured his personal transitions and mirrored the views of other experienced colleagues: "I started out really against all of this, then I moved to ambivalence, and now I'm a supporter." The degree of acceptance and the stated value for the Site Committee indicated how deeply the notion of shared decision-making had penetrated the views of staff members at Brooks.

Another example of the social construction of democratic values at Brooks was the purposeful modification of processes for program changes. Replicating an entrepreneurial model established by the school improvement grant process, the Site Committee constructed a new framework that gave equal access to Brooks' grant monies. Respondents indicated that this open and competitive process increased participation among all staff; 74.3% of the staff stated they were involved or very involved in restructuring activities.

[Insert Figure 1]

Yet another example of the social construction was the Academic Seminar, a 45 minute period initially proposed for increased student access to teachers. Members of the Site Committee and the Leadership Team purposefully adapted the Academic Seminar to increase staff access to dialogue with each other. Twice a month, as a part of the contracted day, all faculty attended and participated in focused discussions, study groups, and workshops. Topics included selected presentations on group process skills and conflict resolution, focused classes on cooperative learning and peer coaching, and continuing study of school profile data. Efforts also were made to include classified staff and community members in the discussions.

Teachers referred to Academic Seminars as a "turning point" for the discussion about school reform and restructuring. A 1990 report from principal Williams stated:

> The Academic Seminars have also brought closer the meaning of empowerment for the staff. It was the teachers' idea and they implemented the seminars with the help of the parent community. The Academic Seminar is a visible example of site-based decision making.

Site committee minutes and sociogram interviews verified that the point of the Academic Seminar was to restructure the conversation about schooling. Although most seminars were focused presentations or had discussion topics, teachers and administrators described the seminars as "the place where we began to have serious philosophical discussions about what school should be." One staff member noted: "The total staff makes decisions. The total staff is involved in everything." Another said, "Here people are more interested in listening to teachers. Anybody who tries gets listened to."

More evidence of the commitment to this open discussion or collaborative learning was found in the 1991 Brooks School Profile: "The school community will continue to have profound conversations about what students should learn and how we measure that learning. Nothing is kept out of bounds of discussion." Site Committee minutes at the end of that year noted comments from the new chair: "Marion expressed her belief that collaboration is the key ingredient to the success of our restructuring." Under her guidance, Academic Seminars during 1991-92 were used to form specific task forces to research and formulate action plans for specific restructuring issues. The task forces represented the Site Committee's determination to involve every teacher in the restructuring activities. The data shown in Figure 2 indicated that the social construction of an inclusive process at Brooks was leading to a belief among staff that their efforts would make a difference for students at Brooks High Schools.

[Insert Figure 2]

Totality

Benson pointed out that in the social construction of an organization there will not be a "perfect correspondence between interests and ideas" (p. 7) When asked about the dynamics of power and influence, interviewees spoke openly about increasing tension, conflict, and politics at Brooks. The changing dynamics were most evident when the data about power, knowledge, and influence were examined by age, experience, and status.

Disparate comments from long-term teachers, new young teachers, and mid-career teachers during the sociogram interviews led me to conduct an extensive data analysis of the age and experience levels of participants in the restructuring activities. Brooks had a sizable number (16/23) of experienced teachers who were new to the building. The comparison of individual's experience in education, the school district, and Brooks High School is shown in Figure 3. What is significant about the data is the imbalance between experience in education and the experience at Brooks High School. In other words, there are fewer long-term staff members at Brooks than is typically found in schools today.

[Insert Figure 3]

The data about staff with 0-5 years of experience are particularly interesting. The data show that Brooks has hired 23 new staff members in the past 5 years, but only 7 of the 23 have less than 5 years experience in education. When this information was compared to the demographic survey data on the age of the staff, the imbalance of career experience, building experience, and age of the staff provided some unique insights about the emerging tensions among staff in the building. According to Table 1, which shows a breakdown of involvement in committees by age range, the largest standard deviation (2.028) was in the 33-38 age range, indicating that the people in this age group responded with a wider range of answers when asked about their level of involvement. Individual demographic survey responses showed that the people in this age range, who indicated they were rarely involved, matched the profile of the experienced staff member who was new to the building.

[Insert Table 1]

One of these experienced, new staff members saw only younger teachers being picked for committees while new inexperienced staff, both teaching and classified, saw the opposite problem, noting: "Teachers here the longest have the greatest voice," and "Long-term teachers and department chairs have the most influence around here." Another staff member, who was very active in the site team, saw more experienced staff as less involved, but described a "typical old-boys network that hamstrings us in a bureaucratic sense." The wide-range of perceptions I found in these comments during the sociogram

interviews led me to an in-depth examination of age and experience as an emerging tension among staff as participation increased at Brooks High School. [6]

New, but experienced, staff were openly critical of their access to restructuring activities. These respondents frequently expressed surprise at how many people they perceived were involved in decision-making at this school. One teacher commented on how political this school was, but seemed bemused about the comment, not sure whether that was a positive or negative trait. Another teacher, new to the building with 15 years experience, expressed frustration at his lack of participation. He was anxious to get involved and complained, "The younger teachers are picked for committees. It's like they think that older people wouldn't be interested in change."

At the same time, socialization of the conflict at Brooks was evident in discussions about "open conversations," "needing to build a common vision", and "coming to an understanding about our school, to create as sense of common values." Staff members talked about the increasing conflict in their dialogue as a healthy sign that they were moving forward. Many of them also discussed the widespread agreement on new ideas. I heard over and over again: "100% of the staff voted to try the trimester plan." The chair of the Trimester Task Force attributed this consensus to her committee's efforts to talk personally with every staff member in the building as they developed their ideas. She described it as "becoming political".

Evidence of increased tension was also found related to traditional and embedded notions of status among certified staff members. People identified as influential most often had titles of administrator, site chair, and department head. However, status and influence were not seen the same way by all staff members interviewed at Brooks; when gender was introduced as a variable, some interesting patterns emerged.

The data Table 2. verifies that female respondents tended to identify more female informal leaders for all questions related to influence than did male respondents. Male respondents tended to ascribe far more influence to administrators than did female respondents. Male respondents tended to identify formal, titled leaders as having more influence on initiation of ideas and schoolwide opinion while female respondents selected formal, titled leaders as having more influence on decision-makers and on implementation of ideas. For all four questions, the high percentage of choices for male formal staff members was due to the number of responses credited to 3 of the 4 male administrators.

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[6] Reported at 1992 AERA in Division A paper, E. Rusch & E. Perry. Resistance to Change: Fact or Stereotype.

Male responses for formal female leaders tended to focus on only three women who served as current or past chair of the Site Committee.

[Insert Table 2]

The choices classified staff made for the same questions were overwhelmingly connected to formally titled leaders. A crosstabulation that examined the frequency of choices for sociogram questions by assigned role showed that other than the question of influence on decision-makers, classified staff identified only 4 people as having influence on the restructuring effort. They selected 3 individuals who served as present or past chair of the Site Committee and the school principal. When asked about influence on decision-makers, most classified staff added formal department chairs to their answer, but overall they still attributed influence to formally titled staff members.

These data are one example of the disruptions and tensions that develop when more democratic process are socially constructed within a traditionally hierarchical organization. The data also show the extraordinary gender and class variations in the understanding and experience of equity.

Another visible disruption of traditional class status occurred among department chairs. As the Site Committee increasingly influenced school-wide issues, department chairs questioned their role and authority within the school's hierarchy. The result was collectively designed new job descriptions. One very satisfied department chair indicated that for the first time in his long career, he felt like he was more than a bookkeeper. This collaboration of the department chairs to realign and redefine their purpose was a clear example of Schattschneider's (1960) socialization of conflict.

Contradictions

Even though the social construction of a conversation about participation, collaboration, and shared decision-making appeared to influence how staff members discussed access to the restructuring effort at Brooks, it had less influence on the actual practices for some people. Some groups, specifically classified staff, vocational/technical staff, coaches, music and drama teachers, and long-term male teachers indicated on the demographic survey that they had less access to the conversation and accompanying activities of restructuring. In order to gain a clearer understanding of how access and influence was perceived and experienced among all staff, I developed matrices using the demographic survey variables to study the data about key decision-makers. First I developed a profile of people who key decision-makers were perceived to listen to during the school restructuring conversation. I then verified those perceptions with individual sociogram responses of the identified key decision-makers, studying their responses for choices that matched and choices that didn't match the perceptions of other sociogram

interview respondents. This analyses identified discrepancies that added clarity to understanding their sense of marginalization or inclusion. The resulting information is displayed on Table 3.

[Insert Table 3]

The most prominently marginalized group was the support staff at Brooks. Despite the fact that they had representation on the Site Committee, they were not regarded as having influence nor did they express a sense of involvement and influence. Many support staff members indicated during sociogram interviews that communication among them was limited. One aide commented, "I don't know what influence classified have. My opportunity to be involved is limited." Secretaries noted that they now had a representative on the Site Committee but they didn't learn about the restructuring activities from their representative. "I get most of my information just from overhearing conversation among teachers," one classified staff member explained. Members of the classified staff were seldom identified in response to any question during the sociogram interviews, even though their names were included on the alphabetized list of staff respondents used as a reference during the interview. On occasion respondents commented on the list of people they were referring to as they answered questions, asking, "Who are some of these people?" and "I'm surprised at how many names here I've never heard of." When asked who they were referring to, these respondents always pointed out classified staff members. Other references to classified staff came from several very experienced people who perceived the principal's personal secretary as being very influential with key decision-makers even though she did not serve on any school committees.

The profile of teachers who marginalized in Brooks' restructuring activities matched teachers who engaged in performance activities (e.g. athletics, band, choir, drama). These staff members were also frequently identified as having little influence. During sociogram interviews, individuals who were involved in performance activities described themselves as less aware of the restructuring effort, less involved in activities, and having less access to information. They were also less convinced that the reform efforts would make a difference for students. Many of them openly expressed concern about their lack of involvement. Coaches, in particular, talked about the professional frustration they felt when their job assignment prevented them from taking a more active role in the conversation. The head football coach, who was a Site Committee member in 1990-91, knew his frequent absences led to a new regulation about Site Committee membership. He expressed enthusiasm for the changes he saw at Brooks: "Everyone really has a chance to get involved," but also described personal frustration: "Coaches are oriented to doing, getting in there and getting the job done. We have a real role problem for inclusion in all

this." By role problem, he was referring to the extraordinary time commitment required beyond the school day during the athletic season that left no time for participation in professional activities. The baseball coach, who was in the middle of state playoffs during the week I interviewed him, noted that "the work of coaches doesn't allow us into the conversation." Each of these individual expressed in some way that the changes taking place at Brooks High School would affect their professional work, but that the current requirements of their assignment limited their time to think about the ramifications of the restructuring effort or engage in the dialogue going on around them.

Other groups that expressed and experienced marginalization in the restructuring effort came from vocational and elective departments. Teachers affiliated with these departments were particularly critical during interviews. A foreign language teacher stated: "The whole department is without influence. I don't think anyone listens to us" "I've spoken out alot, but I don't think anyone hears me," complained a teacher from the music department. An examination of the department affiliation of all members of the Site Committees showed that, over time, there was limited or no participation from vocational/technical fields, music, and foreign language.

The aforementioned departments were also identified by a vast majority of interviewees as having minimal influence. The profile of someone having little influence on the key decision-makers showed either a male or female teacher from an elective program or a vocational program with 16-21 years of experience at Brooks High School. This profile also matched the individuals who expressed the most concern about being heard in the conversation about school restructuring during the sociogram interview. Internal analysis of the sociogram responses of people who expressed concern about being heard also showed a lower level of self-ascribed participation on the part of these same individuals.

When responses to the questions about influence on personal thinking and changes in work assignment were sorted by department, the breadth of the restructuring conversation became visible. Table 4 shows a matrix developed for the questions about influence on personal thinking and influence on personal changes in work activities related to restructuring. In other words, how much influence and listening was attributed beyond an individual's own department? The data show the frequency of responses categorized by department. The category of Other in Table 4 represents administrators, classified staff, and support personnel.

[Insert Table 4]

When examining the individual responses, this table validated the marginalization profiled from the sociogram data and expressed by classified staff and vocational/ technical

department staff. These data also showed that staff members in the vocation/technical areas did not credit people outside their department with any influence on their thinking. It was difficult to tell whether their marginalization was self-imposed or constructed by colleagues who had more access to planning and conducting the restructuring conversation. Members of this department were less active on the site committee, limiting their immediate access to and influence on the restructuring conversation.

Generally, the data shown in Table 4 supported the notion of increased listening and influence across department lines. However, the data from Table 5 verified that the long-term experienced teacher was still viewed as influential by the key decision-makers. One administrator saw the increased influence as growth in political networking: "School restructuring has exploded the concept of networking. Networking with one's peers, networking outside of your building, with other adults in the community and outside of the community." Staff members talked specifically about efforts to listen to people outside their field:

> We decided that the thing that was going to bind us all together, because we're from various disciplines, what we all wanted was to get away from our own interests and our own subject area which we know well, but we haven't done much to connect between ourselves and now we want to connect the subject matter and also connect the student to what that subject matter means in a bigger concept of life.

For principal Carl Williams, the cross-age and cross-building influence emerging represented achievement of one of his primary restructuring goals. He explained: "What we're beginning to do is to shift people to begin thinking systemically and look at the total process, the total school, the total culture." He expressed real pleasure at the diffusion of decision-making across traditional administrative and department lines.

[Insert Table 5]

The self-ascribed participation level of respondents was also a significant factor in the number of people they saw as key decision-makers. People who viewed themselves as very involved in the school restructuring identified 12 staff members as key decision-makers. Those identified included four members of the leadership team, three department chairs, and five Site Committee members. People who described their involvement as minimal selected only the two longest-term administrators at Brooks as the key decision-makers. One former site chair was also mentioned as a decision-maker, but not in all cases. This pattern was also true for respondents who expressed little accessibility to information.

When asked who influenced key decision-makers, respondents identified someone who profiled as a male teacher, 39-50 years old, with extensive (21+) years in education,

and at least 16 year experience at Brooks. The individual usually served on a building committee, a district committee and frequently was a department chair.

The profile of individuals who key decision-makers identified as being influential was somewhat different. They described either a male or female teacher with extensive experience in education (21+ years), but whose building experience ranged from 0-5 years to 21+ years. The age-range also varied more, with some individuals in the 33-39 range and some in the 45-51 range. The profile indicated an individual who typically served on a building committee, but few had ever been a department chair.

There was also a group of individuals who key decision-makers identified as having influence on them who were not selected by respondents. The review of the demographics about those individuals resulted in a profile of the experienced teacher (21+ years in education) who was newly assigned to Brooks High School. I found it interesting that these same individuals did not perceive that they had influence and described their participation as less involved in the school restructuring activities.

Evidence of growing tension came from a detailed review of staff members who did not participate on committees or task forces. This group of 36 staff members included 17 classified staff. Of this non-participant group, 18 completed the sociogram interview. The profile of this non-participant was a male staff member with either 6-10 or 21+ years experience in education but less experience (1-10 years) in the district and building. This individual was self-described as "somewhat involved" and "paying attention to most ideas" and said "information is accessible if I want it." The majority of the these respondents were part-time teachers, coaches, or vocational education department. Female respondents indicated more awareness of information and were more positive about the potential outcomes for students than the male respondents. This gender difference in awareness of information and attitude about benefits to students was not evident for sociogram interview respondents who said they participated actively in the restructuring effort at Brooks.

At Brooks, the evidence also showed that access to and participation in the restructuring conversation was still based more on hierarchical perspectives than egalitarian perspectives. Once barriers were broken down between administrators and teachers, the concerns expressed among these staff members were for participation and inclusion of each other. I found persistent references to increasing communication among certified staff members, but little or no concern expressed for increasing the participation and inclusion of classified staff. Despite efforts to break down barriers of authority, hierarchy and decrease notions of patriarchy, these concepts still governed relationships outside of the certificated staff. The relationships with support staff were marginalized, minimized, and in some cases, almost suspect. Although I found concern at Brooks about how to better involve

students and classified staff, I also found it interesting that no one sensed the link between all staff and the community at large.

Praxis

Benson (1977) said that praxis is people becoming active agents in reconstructing their own social relations. Self-ascribed levels of participation are high at Brooks, with 74.3% of the respondents stating they were involved or very involved in restructuring activities. All data confirmed a persistent effort to increase active participation in the school's restructuring activities. For example, from 1989-1992, 71 out of 108 staff members were active participants on committees and task forces and attended at conferences and workshops. This group, which represented 66% of the total staff, included teachers, specialists, aides, secretaries, and the head custodian. When this list of people was compared to the staff members identified from the sociogram interview data as influential and participating, 67 or 62.6% of the people who actively participated in restructuring activities and committees were named as having influence and being active participants.

There appeared to be a growing concern about increasing the participation of students and parents in the conversation. Williams lamented, "I'm still challenged about how to involve kids in restructuring plans. Kids have a clear idea of what they want, but we get little active involvement in meetings we set up for discussion." Staff members were equally frustrated with how to involve more parents and community members. This year, for the third time, the members of the Site Committee changed procedures for selecting parents for this committee.

The language used by teachers and administrators in describing their relationship with parents may be part of the issue:

> Another part of the challenge is keeping parents informed about what's happening. I think that the danger is if we don't have an open line of communication with the community and with the parents, then they will want us to revert to where we were before.

An administrator described the problem as needing "to make the community aware of what's going on. That's our other big challenge--is getting the community to accept what we're doing as legitimate and as something that needs to take place." The view of "making aware" and "getting to accept" is strikingly similar to language found in 1988 records of Site Committee meetings that included discussions about how to keep staff members informed of their progress. This committee quickly moved to processes that included more sharing and dialogue, giving credence to the right of their colleagues to participate in the

conversation. That same movement has not yet occurred in the dialogue about and with students, parents, and community.

Riverside Elementary School

Working from a mission statement dedicated to "maintaining a community partnership in the educational process," Riverside staff members and principal Molly Weber are building a program of cooperation and collaboration that intends to include everyone in their school community. Riverside Elementary, with only 217 students, is the smallest of 10 elementary schools in a district of 7700 students. The district, located in a university community and urban center of 45,000 people, is still viewed by many patrons as a rural district. Located on the outskirts of town, "we're the little school that everyone forgets," comments principal Molly Weber. She added:

> Because we're small, have had a fairly stable and well-educated community, and have always had long-term capable staff members, Riverside was viewed as the school that could run itself. My biggest challenge during my first two years here was that I took a stand that all of us were going to work together to make Riverside a better school for children. I wasn't just going to do my job and they [the staff] were going to do theirs; we were really going to work together.

Since Weber became the principal of Riverside in 1989, the nature of the community has changed dramatically. Due to retirements, Riverside has 7 new staff members. Predicted to close in 1986 because of low enrollment, Riverside has grown by a classroom/year since 1988. That growth changed the school population, as well. Encroaching poverty now qualifies over 20% of Riverside students for free or reduced rate lunches. Ethnic and national diversity added students from 10 different countries ranging from Yemen to Taiwan. These factors were a major influence on the development and implementation of the school goals for community for staff, students, and families.

Faced with a 1988 district directive to implement Developmentally Appropriate Practices (referred to as DAP)[7], the staff agreed that a Leadership Team of teachers could plan for implementation of this new program. Although the Leadership Team activated notions of collaboration, cooperation, and shared decision-making to move the program forward, the Riverside staff resisted all efforts to elect a formal site council. Principal Weber described the lack of trust in shared decision making:

> When I arrived people told me stories that indicated there was a long history of this idea of family in this school. Yet, I saw lots of underlying issues.

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[7] An approach to curriculum and instruction for children that reduces formal academic processes and increases the sensory, hands-on learning experiences and language development for young children.

> No one wanted conflict. They didn't really trust that I would accept their decisions, that their ideas were important. Teachers would say to me, 'Well, you're still going to make the decision.' There was a real fear that even if a group made a decision, I would turn around and change that decision to match what I wanted.

Despite persistent encouragement of their principal, the support of the Leadership Team, and extensive school community involvement in the DAP program change, Riverside did not elect a site council until they received The Oregon Network grant. This research on their participatory practices began 7 months after the establishment of their first site council.

Riverside's Site Council currently includes parents, certified and classified staff and is responsible for all major restructuring decisions that affect staff and students, including hiring personnel, developing and monitoring budget, and assisting with staff assignments.

Social Construction

There was strong evidence of the purposeful alteration of the features of Riverside. However, the initial changes were initiated by district mandate rather than by people in the school. The data from Riverside are interesting in that they represented the social construction of collaboration and participation within the scope of a mandated change.

Principal Molly Weber's response to that mandated change was to begin the social construction of a new perspective for the working relationship among the staff members. She purposefully gave attention to equal representation of staff on the existing leadership team, adding specialists and classified staff. She persistently increasing staff access to information and research, highlighting key messages in the research to facilitate focused attention to issues. One teacher remembered: "Last year, everytime I turned around, Molly had something new in our mailbox about school reform, cooperative learning, shared decision-making, teacher empowerment, teacher leadership." Another noted, "Molly gave us so many interesting ideas to talk about." From staff comments, it appeared that the message of open communication was being considered.

Weber also invited staff to make conference presentations, another deliberate and purposeful action constructed move the staff from the notion of being a personal family to being a professional family.

The most powerful evidence of this deliberate social construction was found in the parent and staff newsletters. Weber consistently focused her discussion with the parent community on ideas related to collaboration, cooperation, participation, and shared decision-making.

Weber even redefined the purpose of the Student Council and the Parent Teacher Organization to reflect her intent of shared decision making. Staff responded positively to the message of shared decision-making with parents and students. Anecdotal records for

the 1990-91 school year indicated dramatic changes in parent conferences. Procedures for making appointments changed to give parents more access to attending conferences. Students were not only included in conferences with teachers and parents, they were encouraged to conduct the conference. Efforts to engage parents in the DAP restructuring also increased during this school year. Family curriculum nights, which focused activities like teaching math or library skills, involved actual hands-on lessons and activities that parents, students, and teachers worked on together so parents would become more familiar with instructional techniques for helping their own students. These curriculum sessions also gave parents better access to what happened behind the classroom door.

The receipt of The Oregon Network grant, which awarded money the staff could decide how to spend, was the one incentive that finally led to the formation of the Site Council at Riverside. Weber took advantage of the grant award to convince her staff that what they were doing was on the cutting edge of school reform and that they might want to consider reforming some of their internal governance, as well. "I did point out to them that the other eight schools had a site council that made decisions like how to spend this money." When staff inquired how a site council would differ from what they were already doing, Weber explained:

> I told them the decisions would be weightier. That seemed to turn the conversation around. I asked them if there were any people who might be interested in serving on a site team and everyone was surprised at how many people raised their hand. Someone suggested that the list of interested people we had was pretty representative and we should vote on them and that's how our first site council was elected.

Weber thought the Site Council was really bigger than it needed to be, but decided that it was important to include all the people who were interested.

The Site Council's first decision was to use the money to "just talk to each other" so they planned and conducted a voluntary staff weekend retreat shortly after the grant was awarded and 15 of 17 teachers came, as well as several classified staff. The group attending worked through a set of group agreements that defined their new working relationship and their subsequent direction for restructuring.

This research effort began 7 months after the establishment of the Site Council. During interviews with staff members, the credibility and legitimacy accorded to the Site Council was extraordinary, based on the earlier reluctance to change the governance at Riverside. A teacher, not a member of the Site Council, described her view of leadership:

> Leadership in our situation comes from our site committee. We no longer have a principal who is the. . . the boss, so to speak. We have a group of teachers and our principal and parents that meet on a regular basis, and they

> are the ones that are making decisions for our school. And anyone that has input is welcome to go to those meetings and attend and give their input, but the leadership is coming from a core of people, not. . . no longer the principal. It is staff members, it is the principal and it is the parents. The parents are a very important part of that leadership role.

The security of that statement did not match the two years of reluctance described by Weber as she worked to establish more staff participation in decision-making. Yet, somehow the constructed message, for at least this staff member, had made the transition relatively simple and very acceptable.

Totality

Benson's (1977) notion of multiple connections and interconnections helped me gain insight into a very complex dynamic at Riverside. The experience of a first year teacher at Riverside portrayed the challenges of moving a small comfortable family, accustomed to hierarchy and patriarchy, to an interactive adult decision-making team. During the sociogram interview, she said:

> This is my first year. I feel very much a part of the school, a part of the decision-making-making the budget. I'm looked on as a professional here. I'm respected and it's only my first year.

Despite her sense of inclusion in the staff, she was one of the individuals who sociogram interview respondents did not see as influencing decision-makers. Yet, the staff members chosen in sociogram interviews as decision-makers viewed her as having influence; in fact, one person commented on "the fresh insights" she brought to the Site Council this year. This young woman's experience, and the dichotomous staff perception of her, reflected the very mixed picture of participatory practices at Riverside.

The data showed that efforts to increase staff engagement in and accountability for decision-making were progressing, but the efforts had not changed access or attitudes for all staff. Although sociogram interview respondents still made reference to their school as a family, they also ascribed extensive influence and decision-making authority to the Site Council. Despite the brief life of the Site Council, 5 of 19 respondents named the council as the primary decision-maker in the building. Individuals on the Site Council were named most frequently as decision-makers, idea initiators, implementers of restructuring, and active participators. One staff member, who was not on the council, noted, "This has been a wonderful change. Molly's been an inspiration. She gives assistance and support, but she doesn't mandate things."

Once I began to analyze the responses to the sociogram interview questions, it became clear that staff members' perspectives about the influence of individuals on the Site

Council were not consistent. All but two of the Site Council members were named as contributing to the restructuring conversation, but were also named as frequently as having the least influence on staff opinion and implementation. As Figure 4 shows, only two staff member, the principal and the Site Council chair, were chosen consistently as key decision-makers and as having widespread influence. They were named by 95 and 100% of respondents as key decision-makers , with the teacher receiving the highest percentage of responses. Other staff members identified as key decision makers were also council members but were identified less often as the percentages show.

[Insert Figure 4]

Like Brooks High School, age and experience of staff was a complicating factor for influence and involvement at Riverside. The majority of the staff a Riverside Elementary was fairly new to the building, in that they had been there less than 10 years. Yet, like Brooks , most of this newer staff had extensive experience in education. The vast majority of this group were 33-45 years old and in mid-career. In fact only one teacher in the building was in her first year of teaching. This group were not only active Site Council members, they also were identified by most staff members as the key decision-makers and the people who had influence on school-wide opinion.

Evidence of the tension became most visible when data were examined for centrality (Massarik et al., 1960), or the discrepancies in responses. Table 5 shows that staff (site council members) identified as key decision-makers were also sometimes identified as having the least amount of influence on school-wide opinion about restructuring. This data clarified comments from several sociogram interview respondents who said, "Some may not like it, but they continue to work," and "Most of the people I've listed [answer to question about the least influence on school-wide opinion] are pretty subtle". One staff member was described by a colleague as "a very thorough individual. He pays attention to the details, always asks lots of questions, wants things to work right the first time," she commented as she explained why this man had little influence on school-wide opinion. The man she described also was one of the long-term staff members at Riverside. Another teacher, when listing people who tried to influence school-wide opinion but were not successful said, "I've seen them try and just give up."

[Insert Table 5]

Figure 4 displays the demographic survey data about the staff experience in education, the district, and the building. The data showed that only 8 staff had been at Riverside for 11+ years. Figure 5 displays the crosstabulation of participation by experience. The data indicated that participation was active for the newer and younger

members of the staff, yet in interviews, most staff described that arrangement as "the whole staff being involved in decision-making."

[Insert Figure 5]

The evidence of this emerging tension was seen in the differences in participation between experienced, long-term staff at Riverside and new, experienced staff in the school. Staff members between the ages of 45-56 were the only age group who described less access to information. Figure 6 shows the same age group of people indicating that they were involved or somewhat involved in the restructuring activities, and Figure 7 displays how this age group of people between 45 and 56 were involved. No one from the 51-56 age group served on a committee and the majority of the 45-50 year olds were only on a building committee. Analysis of individual sociogram interview responses for this group showed them choosing fewer individuals in the building as decision-makers, choosing four staff members as influential who were not chosen by any other respondents, and selecting only older, long-term staff members as influential in the restructuring activities. An internal analysis of all sociogram questions showed that this group of people, the 45-56 year olds, had a limited view of who was engaged in decision-making, who proposed ideas, and who had influence on all staff. They selected only the principal and the Site Council chair. This group of midlife staff members did not name any of the new staff members at Riverside as being influential or involved in decision-making, no matter what the experience level or age level of the new staff member. When naming influential staff, they selected each other. This group of staff members always referred to Riverside as a "family" and expressed the most reluctance to change the governance process. They were an excellent example of Blase's (1991) version of micropolitical activity that occurs when tensions of shared decision-making and participatory practices escalate.

[Insert Figure 6 & 7]

The central belief that staff members carried at Riverside, that they were a family, seemed to inhibited their ability to rethink the values surrounding their internal relationships. Once they agreed to the establishment of the Site Council, the evidence suggested that how they saw that new form of participatory leadership was as another form of central decision-making. According to the data, staff recognized only one additional person, the site chair, as a key decision-maker and a very influential person. The data also suggested that when respondents referred to the Site Council as influential, they still perceived a narrow span of people as influential. Much of the data from the sociogram interviews suggested that, within the staff at Riverside Elementary, they were still a normal squabbling family, with limited evidence of emerging behaviors of an adult professional community.

Contradictions

The staff members at Riverside were very comfortable with the values of equity, inclusion, and participation for parents and children, but the evidence supported that the staff members were less concerned about the same democratic values for themselves. Because they had always viewed themselves as "involved in everything, like a family", the sociogram interview was the first time some staff became aware that not everyone was actively connected to their restructuring effort. One actively involved teacher captured this concern during her interview: "Responding to these questions, I'm realizing alot of people haven't initiated ideas. Are we just carrying them along? Did they really want to do this?" Three factors influenced the equity of access to the restructuring conversation: a staff member's assigned role, a staff member's gender, and a staff member's status.

There was clear evidence of marginalization of support or classified personnel. Classroom aides were actively recruited and included on building committees and valued because "we are such a small group and it helps staff our committees", but the data indicated that their influence and active involvement was not noticed or valued. Support staff were not ever mentioned as being influential, despite their active membership on committees. Figure 6, which is a crosstabulation of variables from the demographic survey, also shows that they experienced more variation in access to information than any other group in the building. The school secretary, who was very articulate about all the restructuring activities at Riverside, noted that she copied lots of materials for teachers to read and, in the process, usually read the articles herself. But she described her own access to information about restructuring as only somewhat accessible.

[Insert Figure 8]

There was also visible marginalization of the 2 male teachers at Riverside. While no specific evidence existed showing gender issues among the staff, two supporting pieces of data did emerge that gave more perspective to the personal experience of these male teachers. One teacher was about to retire and was described by a staff member as "not really with us for the past few years." Her view of this colleague was reiterated by others repeatedly during sociogram interviews. The other male staff member, who was identified by all interviewees as having little influence, was viewed as "a resister". When probed for meaning, he was described as an avid questioner who needed detail about everything.

One other contradiction that emerged from the data was more subtle, but the evidence supported the marginalization of the site chair. In this case, I do not refer to a pejorative form of marginalization, but rather, I suggest that, at Riverside, the site chair had been redefined as an administrator. How staff discussed her influence and position and the degree to which the data supported that perspective, suggested that she was being assigned

the privileged status described by Wasley (1991) in her study of teacher leaders. As Riverside elects new Site Council chairs over time, this perception and marginalization may change, but presently, in the words of the site chair, "Sometimes this feels like an awesome responsibility."

Praxis

Democratic praxis was visible at Riverside, but the results were opposite of Brooks, in that students and parents were experiencing far more collaboration and participation than staff. Changing the meaning of family for people outside the school seemed to be easier than changing the meaning of family for people inside the school. Based on anecdotal data and staff comments, the evidence supported a dramatic increase in participation and collaboration for students and parents at Riverside. Children conducting parent-teacher conferences, family nights that gathered students, parents, and teachers together to learn, holiday concerts programmed around "everybody singing", children openly discussing learning with "olders and younger" were strong evidence that the social construction of collaboration and participation had resulted in actual practices that affected behaviors and relationships. In this case, the actions and behaviors communicated a value for democratic conduct within the larger Riverside school community.

At the same time, the evidence supported that the same democratic conduct was not as prevalent in the day-to-day relationship among the staff members. Despite an active effort to socially construct a value for shared decision-making, collaboration, cooperation, and participatory behaviors, the staff did not see value in the establishment of a site council until they received The Oregon Network Grant. The deeply embedded notion they carried of themselves as a family appeared to challenge their ability to see the benefits of another form of internal governance. It was also interesting to note during sociogram interviews how easily staff discussed cooperation and collaboration when they talked about children. At Riverside, I recorded more narrative data about relationships with children than data about relationships with adults.

The evidence collected in this study also uncovered efforts to reconstruct the social relations among staff members at Riverside. But fewer people were engaged as active agents in this effort. Data were not adequate to determine why there was less concern about internal access, influence, and participation than there was concern for external access, influence and participation. The praxis of democracy at Riverside Elementary is in what Benson (1977) called "a continuous state of becoming" (p. 3).

The Lessons of Democratic Praxis

If democratic praxis is based on mutual influence, then it follows that research with people engaged in developing democratic praxis should result in mutual influence. I conclude this paper by disclosing my new understandings of the mutual influence of the research process. The lessons learned parallel Dewey's question: "How can we justify our belief in the democratic principal elsewhere, and then go back on it when we come to education?' (cited in Koopman, et. al., 1943, frontpiece). I respond to this question by addressing the dialectical relationship between democratic practices in schools and the education of educators in the university.

Lessons for Researchers

This study was defined by giving attention to dialectical relationships. From the beginning, I acknowledged that the nature of the questions in this research would construct new meaning for both myself and the participants in the schools. As I confronted the new meanings emerging during the research process, I began to understand why Kenwyn Smith (1985) used the singing of rounds as a metaphor to explain the complexities of researching human relationships in organizations. A rounds is one simple and brief tune, repeated over and over, and when joined by other voices at the right moment, the simple tune becomes a symphony. My research represented that kind of challenge: how to enter a song that was in progress, join in the singing without disrupting the tune, stop singing the song, and capture the many voices that continued to in the discourse and the actions of restructuring a school.

I grounded my work in theoretical perspective that openly acknowledged the potential for mutual influence as the research proceeded. According to Mumby (1988), the goal of participatory research is to introduce fundamental structural change by exposing the myths that a dominant power structure can impose on people. Along with other feminists (Hacker, 1990; Smith, 1987, 1990), Mumby posited that participatory researchers are more concerned with redefining the context so previously oppressed interests can be voiced. He maintained that genuine change can only be sustained if knowledge is reframed in terms of the interests of subordinate groups. By inviting all members of each school to participate in the study, by including their role and voice in all aspects of the research design, I attempted to represent a value for equity and inclusion. In many cases, the visibility of non-traditional research participants in schools (names of classified staff members on lists, data reported by age and experience) contributed to new insights about equity and inclusion for research participants.

As this study proceeded, I became increasingly aware of how the reflective thought of the participants during the interviews was exposing a false consciousness about their participatory practices and their values for inclusion. Respondents who left me with more

questions than answers, reminded me that qualitative work has the extraordinary potential to be invasive, to disrupt what we know. As respondents frequently disrupted my own notions of who had oppressed voices, I also gained awareness that my definitions of subordinate and oppressed groups were not value free.

As an experienced educator, I knew how to sing rounds. This mutually agreed-to research process allowed me to join in the round for a brief period of time. My greatest challenge was to stop singing, step back, and only listen to the new songs other people were beginning to sing. If the singing of rounds (a wonderful metaphor for democratic praxis) truly does result in symphonies, then this research will only have value if the round continues in another educational arena.

The disruption I experienced as a researcher was the advantage I found in my experience. I came to question how we, as educators, learn to know democratic praxis. If I can communicate the new song I heard, perhaps disrupt the practiced singing of other rounds of meaning about democratic practices for teachers, students, and school communities, the emancipatory goal of research may be realized.

Lessons for Educators

The implications of this study are very personal. I accept Gutman's (1988) position, that there is a moral obligation to consciously construct democratic values and practices. Based on this research study, I also recognize that the willingness to keep the idea of democratic praxis going is complicated by a limited understanding of 4 key concepts: (1) The social construction of democratic practices in schools; (2) Micropolitical behaviors that support democratic praxis; (3) Systems perspective that explores the dialectical relationship of school communities to democratic societies; and (4) Metacognition, a deeper level of reflective practice that supports the development of democratic praxis. I propose that university educators of teachers and administrator seriously consider the integration of these concepts in all programs for pre-service and in-service educators.

Social Construction

Educators who plan or instruct academic programs and professional training need to commit to a persistent discussion of how we socially construct our world. If people involved in schools are to practice and model the democratic values described by Calabrese (1990), values of equity, justice, integrity, inclusion, and participation, they must also have an increased awareness of the interconnecting relationship of behaviors surrounding knowledge, power, and influence. The results of this study suggest that people in these schools were aware of and engaged in the application of the aforementioned values and

behaviors, but they did not always have a conscious awareness of the interconnecting relationship between the values and behaviors.

These schools engaged in a conscious social construction of democratic values to supports increased participation in school restructuring. The personal dynamics that emerged from these consciously constructed participatory practices dramatically affected the way people in these school viewed relationships in their workplace. Traditional, and supposed insurmountable, barriers were challenged or ignored. Conversations across disciplines, grade levels, and role responsibilities were increasing. How principals talked about staff, how teachers discussed students, how staff members talked about colleagues and relationships, how staff members viewed the relationship of parents to school, was a departure from most literature about the micropolitics of schools.

The free-flow of information and the openness of conversation equalized access to power and influence in both school. However there was one key difference between the schools that I believe made a difference in the outcomes of access to power and influence. That difference was in the persistent collecting and sharing of internal data that gave a focus to the conversation at Brooks. In other words, the meeting of differences moved from a focus on personality to a focus on issues, from a focus on problems to focus on solutions, from a focus on personal differences to a focus on philosophical disagreements. This key factor was a difference in the nature of the emerging political behavior of people in these schools.

Language, the expression of values about power and influence, was also very potent in the restructuring efforts of these schools. Notions of collaboration, whole system thinking, cooperation, shared decision-making governed the thought and practice of working in these schools. I found little awareness that the potency of the language did not always equate to a potency of values about equity, inclusion, and participation. There is extensive evidence that organizational false consciousness (Mumby, 1988) occurs very easily as people engaged in change convince themselves that the changes in stated values and changes in practice are so appropriate that they lose site of what happens to people in the midst of change. I believe that the practice and effects of democratic values in schools will not change appreciably unless this conversation is consciously constructed during the education of teachers and administrators.

Micropolitics

The political aspects of education are not ignored during the instruction of educators, however, most political concepts are focused on external relationships. Specifically, the education of school administrators includes concentrated emphasis on

school and community relationships, collective bargaining, and school law. However, few educational programs analyze the internal political activities of teaching children and administering schools. In fact, most educators, particularly teachers, view their daily work as apolitical.

People in schools also work hard to maintain the image of a conflict-free envronment. If democratic praxis is to become a reality for school communities, educators must gain the skills to confront one another, to mutually influence each other, and to negotiate their way through the serious questions of equity, justice, and inclusion. Educators will need a different perspective of the frustrations and tensions that accompany increased political behavior among colleagues.

As people in site managed schools engage in wider-scale political activity, the influence and perceived influence of staff members changes. Traditional leadership roles and activities that hold status are disrupted. Long-term experience or traditional status roles no longer guarantee of influence and decision-making power. This disruption of authority frequently leads to more questioning of ideas and to increased political activity. At that point, the ability to organize, appear learned, and engage support become critical skills to gain influence in the school. Through the encouragement and financial support of entrepreneurship, less-experienced staff discover they have equal influence and authority to try new ideas beyond their individual classroom. If site-based decision-making is to succeed, all educators must have an increased understanding of the fundamental values and concomitant practices of political behaviors that support the democratic philosophy. They also must be skilled at developing a community focused on equal opportunity for mutual influence rather than equal opportunity to attain power.

Systems View

The most powerful implication of this study is the critical need for a systems perspective by all educators. Both pre-service and in-service educators must explore the dialectical relationship of schools and communities, of democratic beliefs and democratic behaviors if they are to engage in participatory practices that are democratic. A systems view is no less critical for university educators. As academic researchers comment on the lack of relationship between "enhanced outcomes for students" and site managed schools (Murphy, 1993, p.20), I wonder why it is so difficult to see a relationship between modeled democratic practices among educators and increased student understanding of democratic praxis.

It is also uncanny that university educators and scholars, who work at understanding the dialectical relationships of schools and communities, model and maintain isolated and unconnected programs for educating educators. Teachers and administrators

must participate in education that supports a broader and more connected understanding of the educating task. For that to effectively take place, university scholar must be willing to have restructuring conversations across the boundaries of other programs and other systems. They must also begin to explore how the power/knowledge communicated in certification programs socially constructs and perpetuates a very undemocratic educational world.

Metacognition

Metacognition is not only a complex word, it is a complex requirement for educators. The practice of metacognition moves beyond Schon's (1991) notion of reflective practice to a conscious and persistent reflection on the embedded values that govern reflective practice. Educating others is a very serious business, but it is conducted by and for human beings. Consequently, everything we conscientiously construct to improve schooling and the education of others is connected to human action governed by embedded values.

The results of this study point out the importance of professional education of teachers and administrators that supports the ability and the practice of standing back, of reflection on actions, behaviors, and values. The most powerful moments of this research endeavor took place when interview respondents expressed concern about excluded colleagues or teachers worried how their professional learning would affect student achievement over time. This study suggests that democratic praxis in site managed schools takes effect in embedded hierarchical layers. What I mean by embedded hierarchical layers is that all educators are so accustomed to the structures of gender, class, race, age, and experience that govern our activities in schools, that we can only see change in a linear fashion from our point on the continuum. For example, teachers become more inclusive of other teachers, administrators recognize unexpected leaders, and departments cross disciplinary lines. But our ability to see equity and inclusion for the whole system, to address the deeply embedded values that govern democratic praxis is limited by long-standing and well-practiced undemocratic traditions. The dialectical process that merges language and behavior takes extraordinary patience and extended time to affect fundamental changes in values. Teachers and administrators deserve an education that recognizes, celebrates, and trips over the human agency in the practice of democratic values, an education that practices mutual influence, equal expertise, and equal ignorance, but most of all, an education that fosters a willingness to keep the idea going.

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Figures

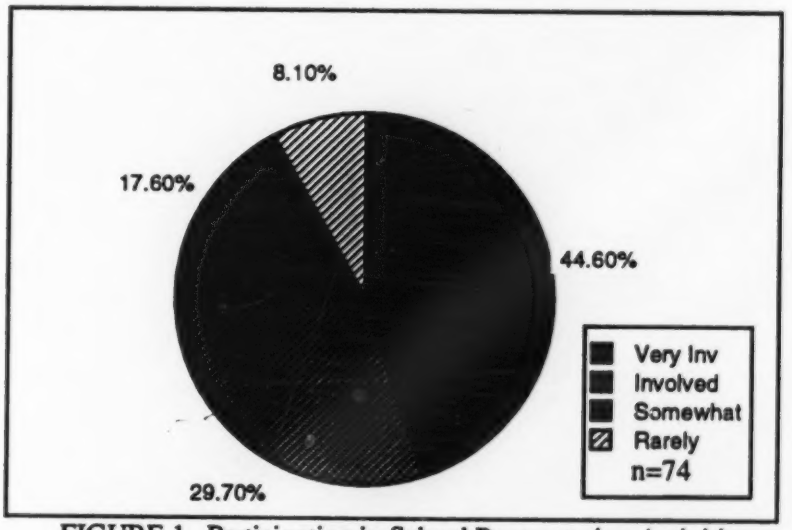

FIGURE 1. Participation in School Restructuring Activities

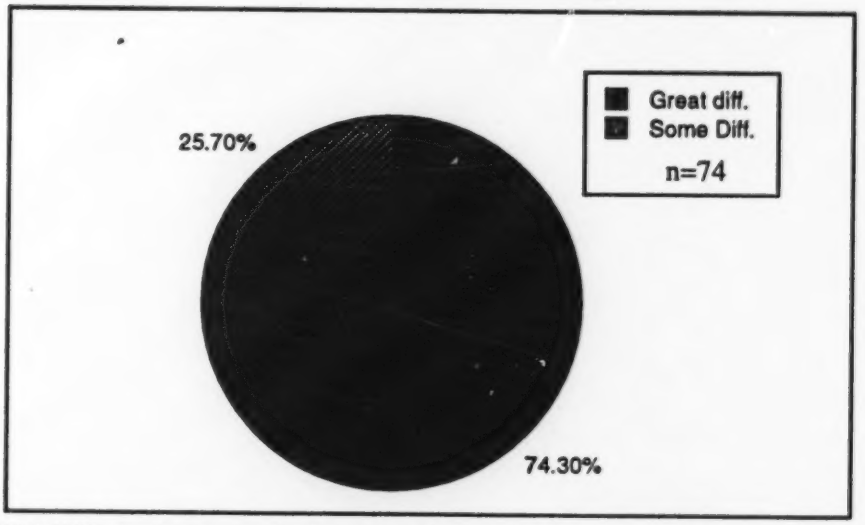

FIGURE 2 Will the Restructuring You Are Engaged in Make a Difference for Future Students at Brooks?

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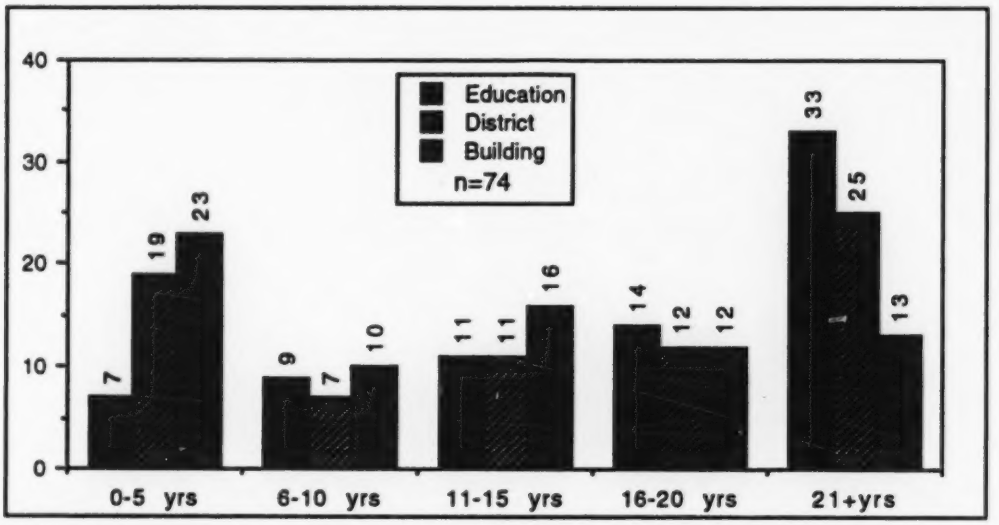

FIGURE 3. Comparison of Brooks Respondent's Experience in Education, District, and Building

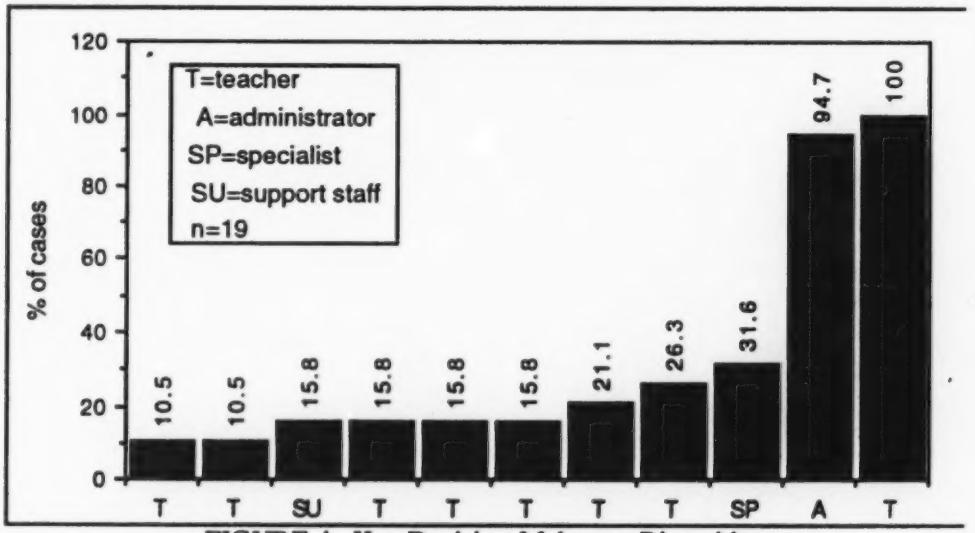

FIGURE 4: Key Decision-Makers at Riverside

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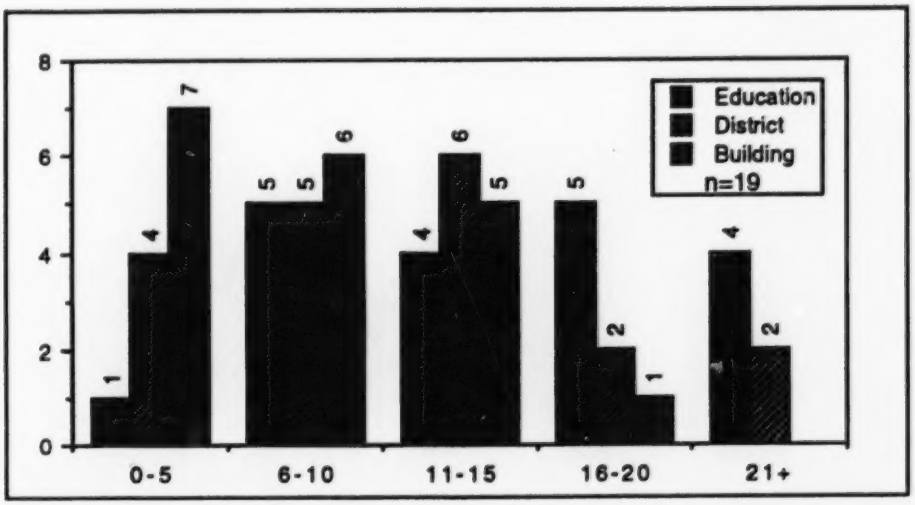

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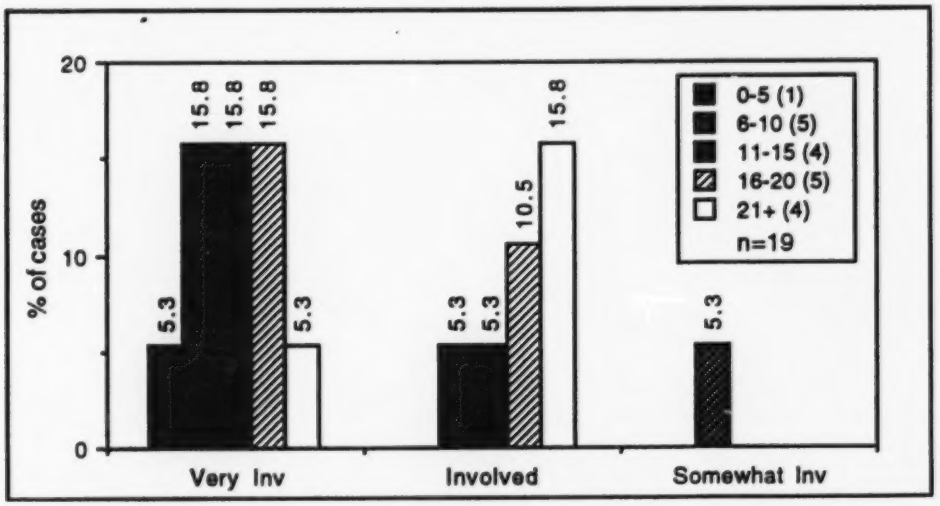

FIGURE 5. Participation in Restructuring Activities by Experience in Education at Riverside

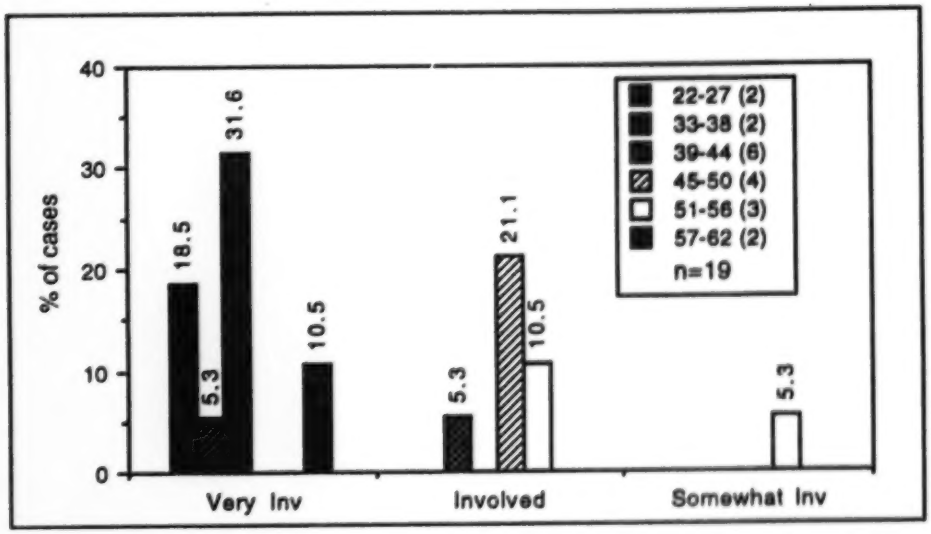

FIGURE 6. Participation in School Restructuring Activities by Age Range

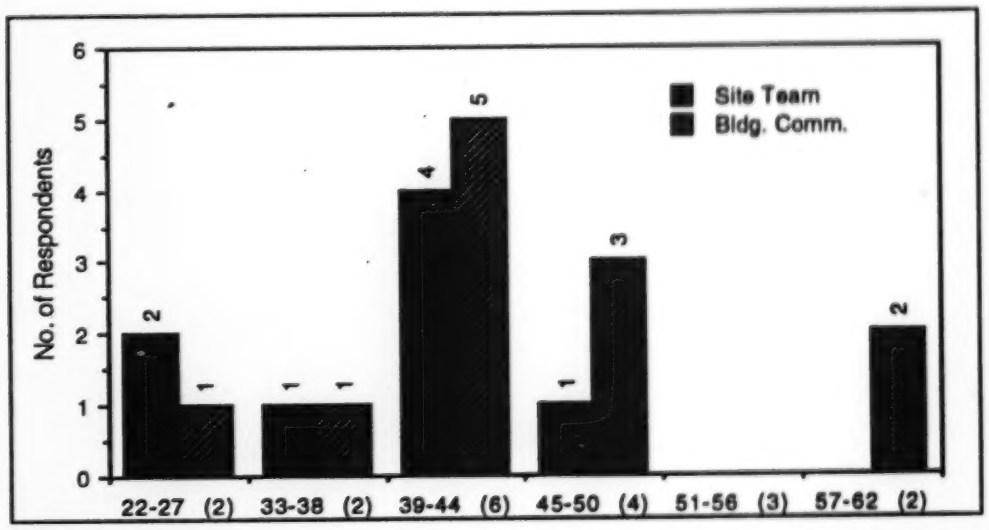

FIGURE 7. Involvement in Riverside Site Team and Building Committees by Age Range

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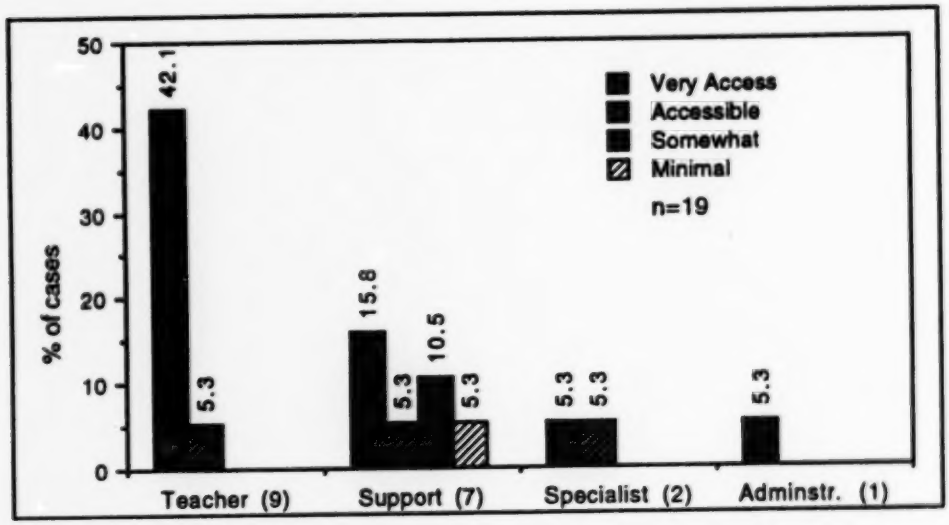

FIGURE 8. Access to Information About Restructuring by Assigned Role at Riverside

Tables

TABLE 1 Involvement in Brooks Committees by Age Range (n=74)

Age Range	Mean	S.D.
22-27 years	10.04	.946
28-32 years	9.33	.894
33-38 years	9.30	2.028
39-44 years	8.82	1.313
45-50 years	8.82	.984
51-56 years	8.82	1.156
57-62 years	8.83	.707

TABLE 2. Gendered Views of Influence at Brooks High School

Idea Initiation	M/Formal	F/Formal	M/Informal	F/Informal
Male respondents	32%	32%	17%	18%
Female respondents	25%	36.6%	13%	25%
On School-wide Opinion	**M/Formal**	**F/Formal**	**M/Informal**	**F/Informal**
Male respondents	51.9%	36.4%	4.7%	7%
Female respondents	40.8%	44%	4%	10.8%
On Decision-makers	**M/Formal**	**F/Formal**	**M/Informal**	**F/Informal**
Male respondents	53%	17.7%	15%	13.7%
Female respondents	60%	16.8%	5%	17.9%
On Implementation	**M/Formal**	**F/Formal**	**M/Informal**	**F/Informal**
Male respondents	43.7%	42.4%	9.7%	4.2%
Female respondents	35%	54%	5%	6%

TABLE 3: Profiles of Sociogram Interview Responses About Decision-Makers and People Who Influence Decision-Makers at Brooks

KEY DECISION-MAKERS	WHO KEY DECISION-MAKERS LISTEN TO
Male , 21+ years in education; 16-21+ years at the site; 39-44 years of age; on site team, building committee, and department coordinator.	Male or female teacher, 21+ years in education and district; either 0-5 years or 21+ years in building; either age 33-39 or age 45-51; and on building committee.
INDIVIDUALS PERCEIVED TO INFLUENCE KEY DECISION-MAKERS	**INDIVIDUALS WHO INFLUENCE KEY DECISION-MAKERS --NOT IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS**
Male teacher, 21+ years in education; 16-21+ in district and building; 39-50 years old, on site and building committee. May also be department head and serve on district committee.	Male or female, 21+ years in education; varied experience in district; 0-5 years in building; 33-50 years old, and on building committee.
PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTORS WITH LITTLE INFLUENCE:	**LITTLE INFLUENCE ON KEY DECISION-MAKERS**
Male, 21+ years in education; district, and building; 45-50 years old, and on building committee. 50% of these individuals are on the high influence list of key decision-makers.	Male or female teacher, 16-21 years in district and building; 45-50 years old; teaching in elective or vocational area.

TABLE 4. Influence on Personal Thinking and Changes Across Departments at Brooks

Department	Academic	Vocational	Elective	Other
Academic	77	2	12	22
Vocational	1	5	0	1
Elective	25	8	25	22
Support Staff	19	2	7	32
Classified Staff	2	0	0	4
Administrators	70	10	16	49

TABLE 5: Patterns of Sociogram Responses for Key Decision-makers at Riverside

Staff Member	Key Decision-maker # of responses	Influence on Staff # of responses	Least Influence # of responses
A	19	77	0
B	18	75	0
C	6	29	4
D	5	33	4
E	4	31	4
F	3	10	4
G	3	21	5
H	3	20	1
I	3	13	0